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An essay on the heart of sex

The famous psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud believed that sex is the essence of life. In his opinion, infants develop their sexual identity starting in early childhood and spend the rest of their lives trying to fulfill that identity. He also believed that it must be expressed all through infancy, childhood, and the teenage years (Delamater 56). This idea was a revelation to the world of religion. While some religions believed in celibacy, Freud stressed the importance of sex. These two contradicting viewpoints are just some examples that highlight the conflict in the field of sexuality. Is it good to have sex before marriage? Freud would have thought so because he believed that premarital sex is just an adolescent's way of experimenting with their sexual identity. But according to Christianity, the most popular religion in America, premarital sex is a sin. The goal of this paper is not to sway you to either side of the premarital issue, but rather to give a comprehensive presentation of the psychological conflict about the issue of premarital sex. By gaining an understanding of the issue, you will be better equipped to decide which side outweighs the other.

Many people would ask, "why should we even care about this issue?" The answer to this question is just as simple as "why should we care about anything?" This subject needs to be understood because it is a major part of everyone's life. A recent study has shown that out of a population of one thousand, almost ninety percent have had sex by the age of nineteen (Chilman 57). Since most nineteen-year-olds are not married, they must be having premarital sex. With this growing epidemic of sexual expression, sexually transmitted diseases also increase at a positive slope. According to a different statistic, patients infected by AIDS have also increased since the eighties. Since so many people are engaged in this activity, knowledge of premarital sex would not only better prepare readers to deal with their sexual problems raging from STDs to teen pregnancy; it may even help to prevent these problems.

Before we delve too deeply into the pros and cons of premarital sex, it is important to have an idea of the cause of the conflict itself. It is equally important to understand the principles of the people on both sides of the issue such as their values, concern, needs, and assumptions. Let us start with the fact that there are people who are for premarital sex while there are people who are against it. The types of people who are normally against premarital sex are religious figure and parents. While most religious leaders are against premarital sex, parents' opinions differ from family to family. Some parents object to premarital sex less than others. From their own perspective, putting religion aside, parents have all the reasons in the world to object to premarital sex, as the basis of parenthood is to teach and protect. By giving their children permission to have premarital sex, a parent is at the same time giving up control of their children. This fear of losing control ironically controls most parents and their actions. How can parents teach their children anything if they can't even control them? Of course the fear of losing control poses only a piece of the parental objection towards the sexual issue. Considering the assumption that becoming sexually active is a significant responsibility, would most

parents wish to have their children step into such an immense responsibility prematurely? Most parents love their children. If they could protect their children from being harmed by condemning premarital sex, it would be their utmost desire to do so.

Within the confines of this parental protection, there lies a child trying desperately to be free. The typical American child was always taught to grow up, to learn through life, and to be independent. While often being endowed with this message, the restrictions from the parents create a double message that often confuses the child and weakens parents' credibility. While the parents are telling their children to grow, they are not giving them the freedom nor the opportunity to be independent.

These mixed messages are also derived from society itself. Commercials use sex to sell products. The sexual content in movies is a dramatic acceleration. A beauty contest is another example of how our culture accepts sexual expression legally while prostitution is an example of illegal sexual activity. Even the designers of current clothing are treating human as venereal objects. A popular song "Adidas" was famous for its line "All day I, dream about sex." With all these sexual messages, the society is implicitly giving consent to have premarital sex to the contemporary generation. Since the society controls the expression of the sexual norm, it is normal according to society to accept sex as a part of everyday life. With this new societal philosophy influencing the adolescents of today, it is only fair to society that adolescents follow the conformity to embrace that sexual pleasure even if it means precociously and against the wills of their parents.

Another social aspect that influences adolescents' decision on premarital sex is religion. While the fear of losing control dominates most parental objections toward premarital sex, the fear of disobeying God presents religious leaders an evident reason to be on the opposing side. Premarital sex is a sin according to Christian religions because sex outside of marriage is a sin itself. There are no disputes against the words of God, but rather against different interpretation of it. If humans were put onto earth to follow the will of God without even ever bothering to question these different interpretations, human sacrifice and mass genocide would still be prominent today. And this is not because God is not perfect, but due to the human errors. For example, Hitler believed that he was following (erroneously) the will of God to create a perfect race. Although the issue of premarital sex probably won't start another mass genocide, it is still important to keep in mind that great visions of God might not be followed with great accuracy. Keeping this in mind, just because an authoritative figure is against premarital sex, it doesn't mean that s/he is correct.

While the adolescents are greatly affected by the changes of society, parents are generally less moved because of their maturity. It is also because of the generation gap between the adolescents and the parents that they perceive the societal changes differently. The parents are viewing the world through the traditional philosophy while adolescents are growing up with totally different sets of rules. This difference of assumptions, experiences, and values is the root of the entire premarital conflict between adults and their children. It's not about premarital sex, or even sex itself. It is about control, fear and external factors such as society.

Since the true issue lies not within the subject of premarital sex, what is wrong with premarital sex? Sex is presumably pleasurable, and a great way to relieve stress. With the technology of today, the condom companies have decreased the failure probability to as low as ten percent (Chilman 77). Other contraceptives such as birth

control pills are also increasing in their effectiveness while decreasing their side effects to a minimum. They even have whole body condoms to protect from any body contact. New creative sexual positions are also introduced to prevent pregnancy such as oral sex and chiro-sex. With all these options, responsibilities that accompany sex diminish, making premarital sex more and more a part of society.

While premarital sex is becoming more and more acceptable in society, it is important to note some dangers that accompany it. From the year 1990 to 1999 the number affected by sexually transmitted diseases has increased in America by as much as eighty percent (Hyam 99). It is only a statistic, the population is unknown, and the expansion of population is not taken into consideration. But as much as eighty percent is an appalling fact. Only about 45 percent of the sexually active adolescents reveal that they used any form of contraceptive during their initial intercourse (109). Another study reveals that as low as 33 percent of the studied population ever used any form of birth control (110). If the technology is improving and making contraceptives more and more available, why are people not using them? A psychological study with a group of adolescent girls shows that some girls actually want to become pregnant. To a population of girls, pregnancy serves a rebellious and hostile purpose against their parents when they feel pressured by them (Gianturco 45). Getting pregnant is also thought by some girls as a way of forcing marriage upon unwilling males. To this degree, premarital sex becomes an excuse rather than purpose. The female is using premarital sex as a method of coping with problems that they find no comfort else where.

This psychological factor is frequently misunderstood by both the society and parents. The society seems to be so concerned by the physical side of the sexuality; there exists a missing link towards an important psychological aspect. There are many adolescents that grew up in a broken home and are deprived from parental love. Studies have shown that they often feel unwanted, unloved, and as a result, turn to sex to express their anger. To them sex is just a form of expressing their aggression, and through sex, adolescents believe that they could receive the comfort away from solitude. This happens rather often especially with teenage girls and women. Boy friends pressuring the issue of sex are not uncommon among relationships. Girl and women frequently give in due to their fear of losing their love ones.

A popular saying that some would give to people, including adolescents, "Have any sex experiences you want, but don't get pregnant or becoming infected with venereal diseases." Such a saying is virtually dehumanizing because it implies that no one cares what happens to the psychological aspect as long as the physical problems are prevented. Adolescents are no longer humans but objects that possess no emotional factor. Many psychological analysts theorize that it is this sense of commoditization that drives people into a rampant search for that wanted love.

Think of how all the messages are sent into an adolescent mind through all the different channels. The society is telling teenagers to indulge themselves. Parents are forcing their children to grow up without giving them the permission to have freedom. Other people are saying to have as much sex as possible, just don't get venereal diseases or get pregnant. While all this time, they are thinking that premarital sex is a sin, and they'll be punished by God and go to the eternal hell for it. This world doesn't make any sense. Sex is a very important aspect of life. It is one of the most precious things that a human possesses. One of the basic philosophies against premarital sex is that because it is

so precious, it should be saved for that special someone that you would spend the rest of your life with. This logic maybe true, but what if this special someone was a mistake? One may have mistakenly concluded that another is her perfect mate and given up her precious gift. Is it still wrong? We are after all not as perfect as God, we make mistakes.

Premarital sex is a conflict of love, hate, confusion, fear, and loneliness. It's not about the act of doing so, or doing it. It is about the human nature that requires fulfillment and how a person copes with the desire amid the conflicting views of the society, parents, and religion. This essay is not here to say whether to have premarital sex or not. The goal of this paper is merely to present different view points and for both you and the posterity to reach a consensus of philosophy that would prevent future confusion among the adolescents. The society is changing; let us just hope it is changing for the better.